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ABSTRACT

Metaphors are useful for creating new meanings and making assumptions explicit. This paper describes the metaphors that four female principals used to conceptualize their thinking about leadership and power. Data were derived from observations and interviews with the principals, who had been identified by their school boards as outstanding leaders, over a 3-year period, and from interviews with teachers at their schools during the first year of the study. Three themes emerged in analysis of the metaphors: the relational aspects of leadership and power; the ethic of responsibility toward coworkers; and the sense of nurturance for coworkers. The data suggest that rather than controlling the dialectic in the schools, each principal is attempting to empower, facilitate, and encourage open expression among members of their school communities. The leadership styles expressed through the metaphors illustrated the concept of "power-with" authority and the notion of leadership as multifaceted. (Contains 17 references.) (LMI)

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An Exploration of Principals' Metaphors for Leadership and Power

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Abstract

Metaphors are useful for creating new meanings and making our assumptions explicit. They are also a rich source of qualitative data which can be incorporated within qualitataive research traditions. Discussed in this paper are metaphors which four school principals have used to conceptualize their thinking about leadership and power. Three themes were noted among the metaphors for leadership and power used. The first was the relational aspects of the concepts of leadership and power. The second theme was the ethic of responsibility expressed toward others with whom they worked. The third was the sense of nurturance each leader felt for those with whom they worked. The findings from this study reiterate the assertions made about the usefulness of metaphors in clarifying assumptions and as sources of data in qualitative studies.

Key Words

Women, leadership, power, language and metaphors.

Academic Biography

Hope-Arlene Fennell is an associate professor in the Faculty of Education at Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada where she teaches courses in teacher education and educational administration. Her research program is currently focussed on studies of leadership and the work of pre-service teachers. She has made recent presentations at the American Educational Research Association and the Canadian Association for Studies in Educational Administration. Recent publications include Leadership for change: Principals and power-sharing; Women principals: A case study; Principals as school leaders: Two women's perspectives; and Thinking about teaching: A case study of pre-service teachers.

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An Exploration of Principals' Metaphors for Leadership and Power

Metaphors are linguistic expressions used to create new meanings and to make our assumptions explicit. Recently, a number of studies have been undertaken in which metaphors have been used to explore the thinking of teachers and school administrators (Munby, 1986; 1987; Finlayson, 1987; Miller & Fredricks, 1988; Bredeson, 1988). Morgan (1986) notes that there is a growing literature demonstrating the impact of metaphor on the way we think, on our language, and on systems of scientific and everyday knowledge. Miller and Fredericks concur and note that metaphors are a rich source of qualitative data which can be incorporated within qualitative research traditions. They conclude "Metaphors . . . are purposeful modes of expression whose truth-value functions, while not literal, do reflect accurately how (italics in original) people think about their lives"(p. 268).

Discussed in this paper are metaphors which four principals have used to conceptualize their thinking about leadership and power. The development of the metaphors represent attempts by each of the principals to gain a fuller understanding of their ways of leading and of their views of and experiences with power. The fact that the four principals discussed in this report are women raises the possibilities for interesting questions related to gender and language, however the writer has not chosen to explore these questions in this paper.

Language, Metaphor and Power

In many ways, we shape our experiences and are, in turn, shaped by the language we use and hear others around us use to bring meaning to lived experiences. While language may be powerless on its own, the ways in which language is used have strong and lasting impacts on individuals and the surrounding social systems. Corson (1993) states:

> It is people who have the power to use language in various ways; it is people who give discourse its form and make judgements about the status of various texts; and it is the situations in which people have power and are using language to serve some potent purpose which give language a power that it lacks when it is without such precise contexts. (p. 4)

Those in power frequently use language to extend and maintain their bases of power by controlling the dialectic between themselves and those viewed as less powerful. Language can also be used by opposing groups to critique the activities of the powerful in efforts to bring about changes to the status quo. Schools and school systems of the past have often served as strong examples of situations where language was used to repress, dominate, and disempower language users whose messages were different than those of the dominating school culture (Corson, 1993). More recently, however, language is being used in attempt to critique and change school

organizations so they are more readily able to cope with the various diversities presented to them by contemporary society.

Those theorists who seek to critique and challenge the current system of language have set themselves an enormous task. However, if they are successful they will begin at last to transform the official knowledge of our culture, including our images for gender,.leadership and power. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) also note that language is an important source of evidence to use when studying the conceptual schemes that govern the ways in which individuals think and act. They contend that "primarily on the basis of linguistic evidence, we have found that most of our ordinary conceptual system is metaphorical in nature" (p. 4).

Metaphor has long been used as a way of playing with language and ideas to create new knowledge. Aristotle noted that "midway between the unintelligible and the commonplace, it is metaphor which most produces knowledge". Since the metaphorical expressions used by individuals are tied to their conceptual systems, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) note that metaphoric expressions are very useful for studying individuals' conceptual systems. Metaphors are also helpful in creating new meanings for concepts.by highlighting some attributes of concepts while suppressing others. Metaphoric reorganizations focus on very specific aspects of concepts. They also focus on highlights of individuals' experiences, making them coherent in relation to the concept. Because of the coherence, metaphors can be useful because "they sanction actions, justify inferences, and help us set goals" (p. 142). Finally, the meaning of metaphors is determined partly by culture and partly by the past experiences of individuals. Therefore the same metaphor may be perceived differently by different individuals. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) conclude:

> New metaphors have the power to create a new reality. This can begin to happen when we start to comprehend our experiences in terms of a metaphor, and it becomes a deeper reality when we begin to act in terms of it. (p. 145)

Brunner (1986) indicates that scholars and artists often use metaphors to link folk theories to the world of scholarship. He notes that, while such ideas are more interpretive than positivist, they "provide a richer, yet more abstract interpretation of human theories in action much as the interpretive cultural anthropologist provides an explication de texte of the culture"(p. 49). Finlayson (1987) sees metaphors as helpful descriptors for dealing with the increasing complexities and contradictory social phenomena noted in organizational life. He notes that "Inquirers studying the complexities of organizational life see some aspects of that life as like some other experiences they have already encountered" (p. 165). An illustration is Morgan's (1986) work in which he used the creative insights generated by metaphors to create new ways of thinking about organizations from experiences in the world around him . He explored

organizations as machines, brains, systems, psychic prisons, cultures, political systems, and instruments of domination. Earlier, Morgan (1981) used the schismatic metaphor to describe dialectic leadership in which power among organizational members is negotiated and renegotiated as the tensions and contradictions are resolved giving rise to new organizational dynamics. The schismatic metaphor appeared to form the basis for the metaphor organizations as political systems (Morgan, 1986) which provides a more humanistic way.to think about schools than the rationalistic business models which are currently being expressed and acted upon. Language and metaphors provide the main sources of data for the research discussed in this paper.

Methodology

As part of a longitudinal study of principals' experiences with leadership, language is both the primary research tool and the primary source of data. Data were collected through in- depth interviews with the four principals at least twice yearly over a three-year period. Interviews were also conducted during the first year of the study with teachers in each of the four schools. During subsequent visits to the schools, observations and reflective notes were used in addition to the interviews with the principals. The notes focussed on the language teachers used to describe their work and the leadership of the principal. The data used for the research on metaphors was collected by asking principals, during a short interval, to think about, record and discuss some of the metaphors they used for conceptualizing leadership and power within their current contexts. The short interviews were followed by asking the four principals to write their metaphors giving brief explanations and feelings about each. The written work was followed by an in-depth interview with each principal four months later. During the time between the written metaphors and the in-depth interviews, the principals were asked to link their espoused metaphors to their ongoing leadership experiences. It was interesting to note that, while the four women espoused interest in the development of language in the lives of themselves and their students, each found the written metaphor exercise very challenging.

Contexts and Metaphors

Each of the four principals, whose metaphors form the basis of this discussion, were identified by their school boards as principals who were exceptional leaders. They also had at least two years in the principalship and had taken positions of leadership, within the educational community, beyond their administrative mandates. At the time of this reporting, all were elementary principals, two from North-western Ontario, and two from the lower mainland of British Columbia.

Eleanor. Eleanor was in her fifth year as principal of Acorn School, a modern K - 8 school in an urban middle-class neighbourhood. Eleanor indicated "I entered administration to see how I could make things better for kids." During the past four years, Eleanor worked with teachers at Acorn School to implement a whole language program. She believed that her role as leader was to provide support and pressure for the innovation on a continuous basis. Eleanor perceived herself as "an instructional leader rather than just a manager who runs a tight ship". Regarding teachers' involvement, she noted "Whenever I can involve staff in whatever capacity I do." One way was to have division chairpersons and divisional meetings for which the teachers determined the agendas and outcomes. Eleanor tried to empower teachers who had expertise in particular areas by supporting and involving them in various school projects.

Eleanor supported professional development for the teachers by providing adequate resources "to encompass all people on staff". She believed teachers to be responsible in taking ownership for their professional development, and that teachers in Acorn School felt "empowered to do these things." Eleanor promoted active communication between teachers and parents through the school's parent advisory council.

Decision-making appeared to be both teacher-centred and shared in Acorn School. Eleanor indicated having minor influence on daily classroom decisions and sharing decision-making with teachers about teaching assignments, sharing resources, the school timetable and space utilization within the school. While conflict in inevitable in any group, Eleanor noted that "There is very little conflict between and amongst the teachers,"and that any conflict which emerges is"constructive conflict because teachers work it through". Eleanor stated that when issues arise, "Teachers come and we work it out" by finding solutions which meet everyone's needs.

Eleanor indicated that she struggled with finding metaphors for power and leadership. Her first metaphor was on power. I was driving to school one day and I started to think of power as being the steering wheel and the ability to direct the vehicle along the intended journey. I could see myself, as school principal, steering the school in the direction of our school vision and mission statement. It means keeping the organization on track and staying out of the ditch as well as finding the best way to travel. It means finding the way that will be the most rewarding and successful for everyone. It was through a discussion with a friend that Eleanor's metaphor for leadership came. The friend compared Eleanor's arrival at Acorn School with a volcano. While the volcanic eruption disrupted the status quo and destroyed many things that had previously been seen as essential in the school, out of the process a whole new situation was created that became very desirable and useful to the learning processes within the school and the Board. The eruption involved changes in personnel, teaching strategies, and approaches to curriculum.

Although, initially, she was somewhat uncomfortable with the volcano metaphor, Eleanor indicated that there was some truth in it.

Sarah. Sarah was in her ninth year as an administrator and principal of Peacock School, a K - 6 school in an inner-city neighbourhood. Many of the children who attended Peacock School were from lower socio-economic levels in the community. A number were also from single-parent, immigrant, or aboriginal families. Sarah claims to have entered the principalship to help the work of teachers and students. She told of her own earlier struggles with principals who did not seem to understand her or children, and who "did mean and hurtful things to children in the name of discipline." Her metaphors and work patterns were also influenced by the injustice she experienced during her own school years. Sarah stated "Seeing kids humiliated, that was really difficult. Kids being treated with no dignity; seeing some kids being treated very well and others not." Sarah concluded that when she sees children in school experiencing injustice, she puts much effort into correcting and overcoming it.

During the past five years, Sarah and the teachers in Peacock School have been developing and implementing a whole language program "to meet the needs of the children. The aboriginal children in particular were not seeing a lot of success with the traditional program." Sarah's beliefs about her role in the implementation process seem to be a strong indicator of her beliefs about leadership generally. During the implementation, she perceived herself as an information sharer, supporter, and facilitator of the process. She also mentioned the leadership of other teachers in the process. "We have a teacher on staff with a great deal of expertise in whole language and the concept is growing on our staff because of her leadership." Sarah indicated that her own leadership in the process involved "The sorts of support I could offer to them in materials, providing opportunities for them to be together to discuss whole language, and to bring in curriculum support people to talk with them about how they are doing in their programs". Sarah valued the work and instructional decisions made by the teachers very highly. She stated that:

> I believe they know what they're doing, they are trained, they can make their own decisions, they are responsible for their own learning, and I sort of provide the structures on which they can make their decisions.

Sarah indicated that there is constant communication between her and the teachers, and that teachers are very much apart of the decision-making about their classroom work and their professional development.

There is much collaboration among the teachers in Peacock School and that teachers work together to find their own solutions to issues and problems arising in the school. Sarah noted that "I don't see a lot of conflict. Teachers work pretty cooperatively".and that when issues arise, she

does not 'push' her views about solutions, adding that "I'm very flexible in terms of the way things are done."

Sarah related two metaphors for leadership and power which she used to describe and think about her role as principal. The first was that of a shepherd. Sarah stated:

> I am a shepherd who moves my flock towards a predetermined destination. I keep my flock moving in the right direction and I keep strays from falling by the wayside or getting lost. I keep a close watch for anything that threatens to harm the flock. I nurse them back to health when they are ill and correct them when they head astray. I am totally responsible for their safety and wellbeing. While I am in control, I follow behind the flock so it may appear that I am not their leader.

Individuals within the flock seem to know the way and lead the others. The second metaphor was that of a judge. She suggested that she is often called upon to resolve disputes involving children, teachers, or parents. She perceived that, in order for their wisdom and advice to be sought, considered, revered and respected, judges must be seen as fair, caring, intelligent, knowledgeable, reasonable and above all consistent. Sarah also perceived that judges are able to empower others by the examples they set and the processes they use to resolve disputes. While she viewed these qualities as challenging, Sarah was also aware that, many times, she was the only person available to assist with such matters and tried to help as effectively as possible.

Carole. Carole, in the fourth year of her principalship, was principal of Southwind Elementary School in an urban school district on the lower mainland of British Columbia. Many new Canadians were visible in the school. Carole indicated that she was accepted into administration the first time she applied and was sent to a school as a vice-principal. She attributed her success with leadership to her qualities of energy, enthusiasm, organization, having a passion for her work, and for teaching children. Carole described herself as an instructional leader whose task is to work with the teaching staff to develop a vision. She stated that "I see myself as someone who really wants to be involved with the teachers and the kids on a day to day basis, making a difference for kids, and that's number 1".

Carole stressed constant communication with teachers. She talked with teachers about lessons and teaching materials, and about motivating and disciplining students, sometimes even demonstrating alternatives which might be more effective in similar situations on other occasions. Carole worked diligently at communicating and working with parents. The parent group at Southwind School had many parents who were new Canadians, so a great deal of encouragement was necessary to get them more involved. She indicated that much of the decision-making in Southwind School was collaborative. Teachers in the school had major influences over decisions regarding their daily classroom teaching. Carole and the teachers both had major influence in

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choosing and implementing innovations in the school as a whole. Many of the innovations they developed were based on teachers' ideas, and teachers have a major influence in choosing and purchasing teaching resources.

At Southwind, there seemed to be very little if any conflict. In dealing with conflict, Carole tried to be direct and open with people, and to bring people together to analyze situations and search for solutions. She noted that "I just have to keep reminding people to be as direct and forward with one another as they can and to be accepting of one another and their differences". She further indicated that, in dealing with conflict situations, she attempted to determine the motivating factors by asking people to describe their feelings, and by working through difficult situations with them to determine how future similar occurrences could be prevented.

Carole related several metaphors for leadership and power. In the first three, she discussed only metaphors for leadership. Carole stated:

> Some days I'm an orchestral conductor waving my arms, directing, rehearsing, encouraging, and building a unified voice with a variety of sounds, pitches, tones and instruments. Some days I'm a great grandma praising the good, scolding the naughty, and supplying mountains of food to keep everyone well fed and happy. Other days I'm a mother bird, teaching my babies to fly and giving them the skills they need to leave me and live independently of my support.

Carole's fourth metaphor is more complex and appeared related to both leadership and power. She stated:

> Today, it's raining buckets and I feel like water. I shower people to refresh and invigorate them. I wash everyone equally, ... I urge people to dive deep and explore hidden regions. I try to permeate everywhere to reach hidden nutrients and to stimulate growth. I wash up against everyone, including students, teachers and parents, and I interact with each person in a way which cleanses and supports. I keep flowing without complaint, and never let my resources dry up. I provide honest reflections as I communicate with people. . . . . I can be as simple as a solitary raindrop, or I can be an entire ocean, with the power to buoy up or the power to destroy. I choose a supportive and buoyant method of relating and though I know my own power, I try never to do damage or harm. . . . . I am fluid. I ebb and flow. I am flexible and willing to change, yet I can remain deeply rooted and firm in my convictions. I am trustworthy and reliable, and follow patterns and provide a structure much like the moon and the tides. And in the spring, when the rain has subsided, and little shoots of growth burst from the moist earth, each precious flower will whisper with pride, "I did it myself."

Barbara. Greenville School, of which Barbara was principal, was a bustling kindergarten

to grade 8 school in the same division as Southwind School. Greenville School had an enrollment of approximately 450 students, a number of whom were new Canadians. English as a second language was an instructional issue for teachers, students and administrators in this school.

This was Barbara's second term as the principal of Greenville. She served 8 years as a principal and vice-principal with the Board prior to her appointment at Greenville. Many experiences framed the ways in which Barbara viewed her work as a principal. Among them were growing up in a large family amid difficult circumstances. These early experiences helped her develop a strong sense of self, strength, and empathy with injustice and the individual needs of students. Barbara also believed that much of what she had done was because "I've been lucky in having women friends that are genuinely really supportive of each other."

As a leader, Barbara believed she was very supportive of the teachers, encouraging them to be continuous learners who were interested in professional development. She was working with teachers to implement changes in philosophy and curriculum design in the school. She noted "I have to be very careful not to be too strong or too enthusiastic, particularly with this staff, or I'll turn them off and I'm not going to get change." Barbara saw her initial role in this situation as one of observing and encouraging what was already happening in the situations. She noted that "I see my role in terms of reflecting to them what they're already doing and encouraging them in their own risk taking." Barbara noted that, while she valued the work of teachers, "I always try to bring it back to the students' reality".

Barbara's 'loonie lunch' professional development meetings attest to her concern about developing curriculum to meet the needs of students' realties. The meetings do not have specific agendas, but are a forum for the teachers to 'pick' Barbara's brain about the area of language arts and language teaching. Barbara reiterated that attendance and participation in such meetings is purely voluntary. She added "That kind of invitational approach seems to be really working" perhaps because teachers feel more powerful and in control.

Barbara also stressed the importance of communication and dialogue to her work. She indicated that she wanted to have on-going dialogue with teachers about bullying, teasing, fighting, and harassing in order "to develop a common response to these things". She also believed that talking with parents about educational policies is important

Barbara noted that decisions related to classroom instruction, from materials to objectives and concepts, were for teachers to make. She indicated that teachers also had a major influence on allocation of teaching resources, and that the vice principal and the teachers negotiated the school timetables and space allocations without her influence. Barbara reiterated that "I like most of these decisions to be made by teachers".

Barbara indicated that there was not a great deal of conflict between her and teachers.

Barbara stated that "if I'm aware there is a conflict I will call the people together and say there appears to be some difficulties here, and I really do confront and talk about the area of conflict or have the teachers talk about it". Barbara indicated that there was very little conflict among the teachers, and did not note the existence of any cliques or groups. She concluded that, because she was new to the context, teachers may not have felt as comfortable in challenging her on issues as much as they might, but she encouraged them to talk with each other and with her about things in order to keep communication levels high and misunderstandings from occurring.

The metaphor related by Barbara was a metaphor for power. She noted that she viewed power as influence and not dominance. As principal, Barbara perceived her power as coming from three sources: her position as principal, her expertise in language teaching and many years of experience as a classroom teacher, and the personal qualities of empathy, and commitment to people and programs. She also believed there was a servant role to being a principal. Barbara stated "My favourite metaphor for power is that it is a river." In further describing the river, she added:

> There is a source - often deep, underground springs It is fed by many tributaries that contribute to its strength. It is dynamic, always moving. It is life-giving and supportive. It is controlled by its banks (environmental context, I guess). It can be destructive when out of control. It can change course when conditions dictate. Communities grow up beside rivers. There is usefulness and nurturance there. Its movement is purposeful.

Metaphors and Meaning

Looking briefly at each of the metaphors, Eleanor's steering wheel metaphor presents an interesting concept in using power for organizational guidance. Stemming from the world of science and technology, the metaphor of power steering can be related to guiding a school or an organization, in careful, thoughtful ways, toward a common vision. Adding power to the steering through the use of hydraulics, in which a variety of apparatuses and pulleys are used to share the load, makes the work of steering an immense burden, such as a large school, much easier to bear. The metaphor can also be perceived as being 'defensive', similar to the concept of defensive driving, where the driver is constantly watching for obstacles and difficulties which occur along the route. An example of an obstacle or difficulty within a school context would be a situation in which an individual or interest group is attempting to gain control of scarce resources. Defensive drivers are those who can anticipate dangers and snags before they occur and work or steer to overcome them. In Eleanor's case, the defensive driving metaphor illustrates a leader who is thoughtfully assertive, and very anxious to set a safe and successful course for the journey toward the vision of the school. Eleanor works diligently to ensure that no one individual or group is allowed to monopolize the school's resources. The 'power' steering metaphor is also illustrated in

that the guidance used to steer is carefully monitored and sensitive to the existing vibrations and movements within the organization in order to avoid over-steering. Eleanor was also aware that oversteering a vehicle with power steering often results in 'loosing control' of the vehicle. She consistently expressed concerns about the need to avoid 'oversteering' the organization by maintaining participative decision- making wherever possible and focusing on the common vision of the school.

From the beginning of her discussions, Eleanor expressed discomfort with the volcano metaphor which she and her friend had used in their deliberations about Eleanor's arrival and subsequent work in Acorn school. Part of her discomfort may have come from the potential for the volcano metaphor to be perceived as a dark, destructive side of power. However, while there is a destructive side to a volcanic eruption, the potential exists for wiping away and burying that which has grown old or decayed, creating in its place fertile ground for future growth. While Eleanor and others in leadership need to be aware, constantly, of the dark, destructive sides of power, they also need not be afraid of using their power in thoughtful, creative ways. Eleanor noted that her greatest challenge as a principal was to use the volcano metaphor to remove the silence of mediocrity from a teaching staff where bright and creative voices needed to emerge, bringing about a new dialogue and a new creativity (Kenway & Modra, 1992).

Sarah's metaphors, the shepherd and the judge, seemed very Biblical in nature, and more closely related to patriarichal, masculine images than to those linked with femininity. This is not surprising since many women grow up strongly influenced by male images and surrounded by the expectations of patriarichal styles of leadership in organizations where they lead and work. The use of such metaphors indicates that Sarah is deeply aware of her own personal power in the lives of others around her, and views her power from a relational perspective, and as a great responsibility in terms of the lives and work of others. (Watkins, 1989). Here power may be viewed by others as a combination of 'power with and power over' (Dunlap & Goldman, 1991) which allows Sarah to use power more flexibly. The combined concepts of 'power with and power over' allow Sarah to advocate directly for individuals unable to do so for themselves, but also to encourage and empower individuals who were able to speak and act independently.

Carole's and Barbara's metaphors are both based on water. Carole views water as nurturing and lifegiving, focuses extensively on the facilitative aspects of leadership and power (Dunlap & Goldman, 1991). Her water metaphor also has within it a reflection of "the Tao of leadership" (Heider, 1988) where the water metaphor describes a leader who is fluid and malleable in nature, using power very gently, and only for good. Barbara, in describing her river metaphor, also focuses mainly on the nurturant aspects of water power. However, she also noted that rivers, when their power is out of control, can be very destructive. It is noted, therefore,

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that the water metaphors can have within them dark, murky places as well refreshing nurturing places.

Conclusions

Three themes were noted among the metaphors for leadership and power used by the four principals to describe their experiences. The first was that the metaphors used by each illustrated linkages between power and leadership as concepts closely related to each other (Watkins, 1989). From Barbara's perspective, particularly, leadership is viewed as a subset of the power. Barbara indicated, throughout her discussions of leadership and power, that she believed power to be multi-faceted, rooted in a combination of her personal, professional, and positional experiences.

Sarah also perceived her power as multi-faceted, particularly when she described herself as a kindly shepherd leading and guiding from the front on some occasions and the back on others. Her multi-faceted views of power were also noted through the judge metaphor when she attempted use her power to empower colleagues on some occasions and students on others. In describing a critical incident during which she counseled a student having difficulties in his home, Sarah also described power as the ability to speak and to listen. Her description of the strong influence she felt herself exerting as she spoke and listened to the student was filled with concern, but also with a deep humility for the extent to which the student and his parents valued and appreciated her influence in their lives beyond the school.

The second theme was the sense of responsibility which each of the four felt and expressed toward all those with whom they worked. Carole's and Sarah's expressions indicated a profound sense of personal responsibility as they worked with their colleagues. Nested within the responsibility theme was that of servanthood, illustrated by their constant examples of self-giving and nurturing. These findings are similar to Helgesen's (1990) experiences with the four women she studied, and the voices from Gilligan's (1982) studies where the findings noted that the voices of the women they studied each expressed an ethic of care and responsibility for others. The deep senses of concern for others, shared by the four principals in this research, also reminds us of Noddings (1984) description of 'one-caring'.

The third theme noted was the sense of nurturance which was expressed through each of the metaphors. Carole spoke of feeling like nurturing water which washed over her colleagues refreshing and replenishing their resources. Eleanor discussed the nurturance of children as a main part of her vision of leadership. Barbara, as a river, nurtured a variety of communities along the banks as she journeyed on toward the sea of life's experiences. Sarah, as the shepherd, expressed a great deal of responsibility for the nurturance and guidance of her flock on a daily basis.

Other themes were expressed by some of the principals, but not all. Carole's and Barbara's metaphors linked to water suggest a quiet, constant strength which ebbs and flows throughout situations. The fluidity of the metaphor also attested to their beliefs about the constance and importance of change, and about being available to help others smooth the rough corners and edges of change.

Eleanor's volcano metaphor considered change in a different way. By setting off some minor eruptions, she was able to help people free themselves from the status quo and create the forum for new qualities and programs to begin and grow. These eruptions and their resolution are similar to the tensions and resolutions which Morgan (1981) discussed in his schismatic metaphor. Eleanor's volcanic eruption and subsequent use of hierarchical power are supported by Kenway's and Modra's (1992) discussion in which they indicate that, on occasion, hierarchical power is required to allow the brightest and best voices to be heard beyond the silencing consensus of a group which exists on a false sense of equality. Such a group, dedicated to a status quo of mediocrity, were reported to exist in Acorn School prior to Eleanor's arrival.

At the outset of this paper we were introduced to Corson's (1993) claim that language is a powerful shaper of human experience. We are also aware of Lakoff's and Johnson's (1980), Munby's (1986; 1987), Finlayson's (1987), Miller 's and Fredricks' (1988), and Bredeson's (1988) claims that new metaphors have the power to create new reality. Each of the principals' metaphors appears to be very much part of the realities, and often, new realities in each of the schools where they lead and work. In each situation, the principals' personal metaphors are couched within the overarching structure of holistic language programs which also permeate the processes of constant communication, conflict resolutions, and shared decision-making. There is strong evidence that, rather than controlling the dialectic in the schools, each principal is attempting to empower, facilitate and encourage open expressions by teachers, students, parents, and others in the school communities. Similar to Corson's (1993) views that "language is the vehicle for identifying, manipulating and changing power relations between people" (p. 1), each has metaphorically expressed leadership styles which are facilitative, flexible, nurturing and transformative for those they serve within the school communities. We also see clear indications of the relationships between leadership and power through the many illustrations of the concept of 'power with' and leadership which is multi- faceted, involving individuals throughout schools as organizations. Lastly, we are provided with further examples of the value of metaphors as tools for studying the ways in which people think about and experience their lives.

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